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# MODERN LANGUAGE NOTES

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## A LITURGICAL PLAY OF JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN.

Some years ago, as an appendix to *Ordinaires de l'Église Cathédrale de Laon*,<sup>1</sup> M. le Chanoine Ulysse Chevalier published two dramatic texts from MS. 263 of the Bibliothèque de Laon,—an *Ordo Prophetarum*<sup>2</sup> and an *Ordo Stelle*,<sup>3</sup>—each of which was a valuable contribution to the study of a type of play already well known.<sup>4</sup> MS. 263, however, contains another dramatic text,—an *Ordo Joseph*, treating the story of Joseph and his brethren,—of a type hitherto unknown to liturgical drama.

The manuscript before us is officially described as follows :

263. In—folio sur vélin.—(Hymni et prosae).—  
xiii<sup>e</sup> siècle. Provient de Notre-Dame.<sup>5</sup>

The manuscript is a Troparium-Hynarium-Prosarium of the cathedral church of Laon. The dramatic texts already mentioned<sup>6</sup> appear in the manuscript in an unbroken series, as follows :

<sup>1</sup> *Ordinaires de l'Église Cathédrale de Laon (xii<sup>e</sup> et xiii<sup>e</sup> siècles) suivis de deux Mystères liturgiques publiés d'après les manuscrits originaux* par le Chanoine Ulysse Chevalier, Paris, Picard, 1897 (Bibliothèque Liturgique, Tome Sixième).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, pp. 385–389.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, pp. 389–394.

<sup>4</sup> See E. K. Chambers, *The Medieval Stage*, Oxford, 1903, Vol. II, pp. 41–56 ; II. Anz, *Die lateinischen Magierspiele*, Leipzig, 1905 ; M. Sepet, *Les Prophètes du Christ*, Paris, 1878.

<sup>5</sup> *Catalogue général des Manuscrits des Bibliothèques publiques des Départements*, t. I, Paris, 1849, p. 155.

<sup>6</sup> The manuscript contains (fol. 145<sup>r</sup>) also an unimportant version of the well known *Visitatio Sepulchri*, furnished with musical notation on four red lines. This text, which follows immediately upon the Magnificat of the First Vespers of Easter, is as follows :

In aurora processio ad Sepulchrum. Duo in albis capis intrant cantantes :

Ardens est cor nostrum.

Angeli ad eos :

Quem queritis in sepulchro, o Xpisticole ?

(1) *Ordo Prophetarum*, fol. 147<sup>r</sup>–149<sup>r</sup> ;

(2) *Ordo Stelle*, fol. 149<sup>r</sup>–151<sup>r</sup> ;

(3) *Ordo Joseph*, fol. 151<sup>r</sup>–153<sup>r</sup>,

None of these texts has musical notation.

The *Ordo Prophetarum* and the *Ordo Stelle* were, no doubt, performed at Christmas and Epiphany, respectively. Although the manuscript furnishes no indication as to the liturgical associations of the *Ordo Joseph*, printed below, this play may well have been attached to the third Sunday of Lent (Dominica III in Quadragesima), for the Lessons of Matins of this day provide a substantial part of the story of Joseph.<sup>7</sup> In general the play follows closely the substance of the Biblical account.

The text below is, perhaps, a grateful addition to the body of liturgical plays for two reasons : first, in that it introduces a new subject into the repertory ; and secondly, in that it is one of the very few liturgical plays that treat stories from the Old Testament.

<fol. 151<sup>r</sup>> ORDO IOSEPH.<sup>8</sup>

Letetur hodie  
Chorus fidelium ;  
Quiescant fabule,  
Crescat silentium.  
Sequantur homines

Respondent :

Thesum nazarenum crucifixum, o celicole.

Angelus :

Non est hic ; surrexit sicut predixerat ; ite, nuntiate  
quia surrexit, dicentes :

Duo :

Surrexit Dominus vere, alleluia.

Cantor :

Xpistus resurgens.

The text and the page end here. The next page (fol. 145<sup>v</sup>) begins : In die sancto Pasche ad processionem.

<sup>7</sup> Genesis, cap. xxxvii.

<sup>8</sup> Bibliothèque de Laon, MS. 263, fol. 151<sup>r</sup>–153<sup>r</sup>. The heading is preceded immediately by the concluding words of the *Ordo Stelle* (fol. 149<sup>r</sup>–151<sup>r</sup>),—Ey dolor est ; nolo consolari, quia non sunt. See *Ordinaires*, p. 394.

Ioseph consilium ;  
 Vitent mulieres  
 Nature uitium.  
 Iam recitabitur  
 Grauis inuidia,  
 Quom Ioseph pertulit  
 Fratrum nequitia.  
 Si fratri nocuit  
 Fratrum odium,  
 Fratribus profuit  
 Ioseph dominium.  
 Si scire placeat  
 Que sint exordia,  
 De Iacob Moysi

< fol. 151<sup>v</sup> > Narrat historia.

Audite pariter  
 Que causa fuerit,  
 Cur domus Israel  
 Mare transierit.

Iacob uocat Ioseph et dicit :

Ioseph, nate  
 Mi dilecte,  
 Scire uolo, propera  
 Circa fratres  
 Atque greges,  
 Si sint cuncta prospera.

Ille, accepto baculo, uadit. Fratres eum  
 uidentes dicunt :

Ecce uenit  
 Somniator,  
 Nobis datur copia.  
 Occidamus,  
 Videamus,  
 Si quid prosint somnia.

Ruben eum uolens liberare dicit :

Non est bonum  
 Ut fratrum  
 Effundamus sanguinem ;  
 Sed exutum  
 Recondamus  
 In cisternam ueterem.  
 Vestem eius  
 In edinum  
 Polluamus sanguinem,  
 Atque patri

Per ignotum  
 Remittamus hominem.

Exeunt illum et ponunt in cisternam. Apparent  
 Hismaelite, quos uidens Iudas dicit ad fratres :

Mercatores  
 Hismaelis  
 Veniunt de finibus.  
 Venundetur  
 Transmarinis  
 Et ignotis partibus ;  
 Vivat puer,  
 Impollutis  
 Et nos simus manibus.

Iudas extrahit eum de lacu, et ducens secum ad  
 mercatores dicit :

State, queso.  
 Vobis uendo  
 Puerum egregium ;  
 Vos bis denos  
 Miki nummos  
 Dabitis in pretium.

Unus de mercatoribus ad socios dicit :

Festinate, socii,  
 Soluite marsupium.  
 Donentur argentei,  
 Bonum est commercium.

Iudas, acceptis argenteis, redit et diuidit inter  
 fratres. Hismaelite Ioseph splendida ueste indu-  
 tum ducunt, et uenientes ante Pharaonem dicunt :

Viuat rex in eternum.

Et transeuntes < fol. 152<sup>r</sup> > Futiphar eunucum  
 dicunt :

Puerum de nobili  
 Genitum prosapia,  
 Quem ostendit nobilem  
 Facies eximia,  
 Regali seruitio  
 Volumus relinquere,  
 Emptum graui precio,  
 Si plus uelis emere.

Phutifar, uocato consilio, intuens puerum dicit :

Ex aspectu pueri

Bonam spem concipio.  
 Nostro bene poterit  
 Servire palatio.  
 Date quod exigitur  
 Pretium pro puero.

Consiliarii surgunt, et leti de puero dicunt ad  
*dominum suum* :

Libenter agimus  
 Tuum imperium ;  
 Gratanter addimus  
 Nostrum consilium.  
 Videtur utilis  
 Ista mercatio.  
 Dimittant puerum,  
 Accepto pretio.

Mercatores, parata statera, ponderant argentum,  
 et inclinantes regi, in partem uadunt. Ruben  
 reuersus ad puteum et non inueniens puerum dicit :

Querens non inuenio,  
 Quo me uertam nescio.  
 Qui pro nobis exiit,  
 Per nos frater periit.

Interim peregrinus quidam iuxta fratres Ioseph  
 transiens uocatur. Dant illi tunicam Ioseph et  
 dicunt :

Redde patri  
 Vestem nati,  
 Defunctumque nuntia.  
 Si tristatur,  
 Illum nostra  
 Leuabit presentia.

Vadit peregrinus ad Iacob, excitat illum, os-  
 endit tunicam, et dicit :

Vide, uestis  
 An sit ista  
 Ioseph tui filii ?  
 Eius quippe  
 Credens esse,  
 Reportare uolui.

Iacob pauefactus surgit. Tunicam agnoscens  
 dicit :

Ioseph, fili,  
 Cur te misit  
 Paterna stultitia !

Te crudelis  
 Deuorauit  
 Et insana < fol. 152<sup>r</sup> > bestia !

Quo dicto cadit pasmatus. Accedunt filii eius  
 et leuantes eum dicunt :

Care pater,  
 Ne te tanti  
 Vis doloris superet.  
 Cum profecto  
 Vitam nemo  
 Mortuus recuperet.

Iacob iterum clamat :

Ioseph, fili, ut supra.

Iterum filii eius consolantur eum et dicunt :

Audi, pater,  
 Liberorum  
 Preces et solatia.  
 Certe nosti  
 Quia multos  
 Occidit tristitia.

Quiescit Iacob ; sedent filii eius circa eum.  
 Iterum uxor Phutifar diligens Ioseph uocat eum  
 secreto. Ioseph non concedit consilio, quo uolente  
 discedere, illa clamidem rapit, Ioseph dimisit et  
 fugit. Illa festinat ut innocenti culpam<sup>9</sup> impo-  
 nat. Ante dominum suum uenit, clamidem secum  
 ferens ; clamorem in hec uerba facit :

Ioseph ille  
 Cui tantam  
 Dedisti potentiam,  
 Nos offendit  
 Atque summan  
 Maiestatem regiam !  
 Me lascius  
 In conclau  
 Voluit opprimere !

Et ostendens clamidem dicit :

Ecce clamis  
 Quam amisit  
 Cum uellet discedere !

Facto clamore discedit. Eunucus ad famulos :

<sup>9</sup> ms., culpam.

Hic ebreus  
 Quasi reus  
*Seruetur* in carcere ;  
 Qui dilectam  
 Nobis sponsam  
 Voluit opprimere.

Ioseph in carcerem uadit. Rex recordatus  
 pistoris et pincerne produci iubet e carcere. Pistor  
 exit cum nebulis et cophino, et pincerna cum uite  
 et racemis ; *quibus* ante regem presentatis, pin-  
 cerna ait :

Ioseph nobis sapiens  
 Reuelauit somnia,  
 Quod haberem *gratiam*  
 Et pistor suspensia.

Pistor ad regem :

Parce tuo < fol. 153<sup>r</sup> > famulo,  
 Rex inuicte, Pharao !  
 Si recusas parcere,  
 Fiat tua iussio.

Rex ait de pistore :

Hic dampnetur,

De pincerna :

Et hic suo  
 Reddatur officio.  
 Sic de illis  
 Curialis  
 Ordinauit ratio.

Iterum rex mittit, et Ioseph de carcere educto  
 et uenienti ante se dicit :

Non ignoro  
 Quanta tui  
 Cordis sit prudentia,  
 Qui tam mire  
 Visionis  
 Reuelasti somnia.

Et porrigens ei sceptrum dicit :

Per te bona  
 Regni nostri  
 Disponantur omnia.

Ioseph, osculata dextera, et genu inclinans regi

sessum uadit. *Surgunt* filii Iacob, et excitantes  
 patrem dicunt :

Audi, pater,  
 Nos *instante*  
 Fames urget ualida.  
 Nobis dictum  
 In Egiptum  
 Quod sit ingens copia.  
 Vis eamus  
 Vel mittamus  
 Comparandi gratia ?

Iacob dans eis argentum dicit :

Hoc argento  
 De frumento  
 Quod est necessarium.  
 Comparete  
 Reportantes  
 Ad uite subsidium.  
 Benjamin  
 Exiguum  
 Habebo solatium ;  
 Hic mecum remaneat,  
 In uia ne pereat.

Vadunt in Egyptum, et uenientes ante Ioseph  
 dicunt :

Te, ministrum tanti regis,  
 Qui sub rege cuncta regis,  
 Salutantes ueneramur,  
 Ne superbi uideamur.

Ioseph ad fratres :

Scire uolo  
 Que sit uobis  
 Veniendi ratio.  
 Enarrate  
 Qui uos estis,  
 Et que uestra natio.

Respondent fratres et adeuntes Ioseph < h >  
 dicunt :

Procurator  
 Et saluator  
 Totius prouincie,  
 Regnum regis  
 Pharaonis  
 Subintramus hodie,

Ut argento  
Comparatis  
Onerati frugibus.

<fol. 153\* > Ioseph suscipit argentum, dat eis  
in saculis frumentum, et cum frumento reponit  
argentum. Et fratres discedunt securi. Et Ioseph  
uocat famulos et mittit post illos dicens :

Que mora iam nostros  
Detinet famulos ?  
Currite citius,  
Soluite saculos ;  
Frumentum deferunt  
Atque pecuniam.  
Pati non possumus  
Talem iniuriam.

Famuli ad fratres :

Fultum fecistis ;  
Tormenta pati meruistis.  
Procuratori  
Si placet, ite mori.

Reducuntur fratres ; inuenta est pecunia in sacu-  
lis ; confusi uerecundia tacent. Dicit eis Ioseph :

Furti quidem conscii  
Omnes estis socii.  
Sed unum de fratribus  
Tenebo pro omnibus.  
Carcer hunc custodiat  
Donec ille ueniat  
Quem pater retinuit,  
Qui plus ei placuit.

Unus tenetur captus ; alii discedunt inter se  
dicentes :

Merito grauissimam  
Patimur iniuriam.  
Talis retributio  
Est pro fratre uendito.

Venientes ad patrem deponunt sacculos et  
dicunt :

Pater dilectissime,  
Nobis male contigit.  
Pro nobis in laqueum  
Fratres noster incidit.  
Quolibet euadere  
Pretio non poterit,

Nisi prius Benjamin  
Princeps ille uiderit.

Iacob amplexatus Benjamin exclamat :

Eya, fili Benjamin,  
Fili mi, quid faciam ?  
Quo te fratres distrahunt  
Ad innotam patriam.  
Deus te reliquerat  
Pro Ioseph solatium ;  
Quod te perdam, fili mi,  
Mortis est inditium.

Iudas ad patrem :

Esto, queso, patiens,  
Sicut pater sapiens.  
Me seruum pro puero.<sup>10</sup>

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## TWO OLD FRENCH LYRICS HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED.

In a recent book on the musical notation of the  
lyrics<sup>1</sup> of mediæval France, Dr. Jean B. Beck  
divides the types of music into three classes or  
modi. The first modus is arranged for a verse of  
seven syllables. It consists of a musical scheme,  
which comprises a regular alternation of long and  
short notes, the first note and the last being long.  
An example of such a verse is the song '*En mai  
quant la matinée.*' A variation of this modus is  
arranged for eight syllables instead of seven. In  
this case the line begins with a short note, but in  
other respects it is wholly like the form for a verse  
of seven syllables. A poem of this second type is  
the second one published in the present article,  
'*En la douce saison d'estey.*' The second modus  
is arranged for a seven syllable verse, but differs

<sup>10</sup> Here ends the page and the fragment. Two folios  
have been torn out at this point. On folio 154\* begins, in  
a later hand (saec xiv in.), a series of hymns of the  
Canonical Office.

<sup>1</sup> J. B. Beck ; *Die Melodien der Troubadours*. Strass-  
burg, 1908.